

In November, a group of airline pilots flew UN delegates from more than 80 countries from New York to Montreal in a private initiative designed to emphasize the need for states to ratify the various conventions on hijacking.

The year 1971 also marked the successful completion of negotiations between ICAO and the Federal Government concerning the construction of a new headquarters building for ICAO in Montreal. Once the choice of site and of building had been made by ICAO, the Federal Government agreed to contribute \$1.1 million annually for 30 years towards the costs of renting the new premises, which are expected to be ready for occupancy late in 1973.

In November, under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization, Canada participated in two conferences in Brussels concerning the establishment of an international fund to combat maritime oil pollution and the adoption of an agreement on liability for the maritime carriage of nuclear substances.

Human Rights

As has been increasingly the case in recent years, UN human rights debates during 1971, both in the Human Rights Commission and in the Third Committee of the General Assembly, were noticeably political in nature. The subjects of *apartheid*, the Middle East situation, self-determination and colonialism continued to dominate discussion. On the substantive side, there were some interesting developments.

The Third Committee of the General Assembly moved in better order and at a better pace than in recent years through its overcrowded agenda. It considered this year the triennial report of the UN on the world social situation. This report, containing sections on regional developments and also on developments in functional areas, such as population, nutrition, education and housing, noted progress in some areas. It expressed concern, however, about the growing disparities in progress between developing and developed countries, on the one hand, and among different levels of society within all countries, on the other. In all countries, marginal groups were being left further and further behind in the developmental process, with seemingly little hope of improving their situation. Unfortunately, taking into account the seriousness of the report and of the debate, the resolution adopted by the General Assembly cannot be said to have been particularly representative of the debate.

The year 1971 was celebrated as the "International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination". This provided the occasion for a wide-ranging debate in the Third Committee on racial discrimination, during which the frustration of the majority of the countries of Africa and Asia at the lack of real progress in this area was notable. There were, nonetheless, interesting interventions relating to the diverse activities aimed at promoting racial equality and undertaken during the course of the year by member states, by the UN and its Specialized Agencies, and by non-governmental organizations.

The item "Human Rights in Armed Conflicts", which was debated thoroughly by the General Assembly for the first time in 1970, provided the occasion for a further evolution of the international community's attitude on the need to protect civilian populations caught up in civil and international hostilities.